

Eric Cobaugh
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Raleigh, NC 27615

January 3, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
The U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft,

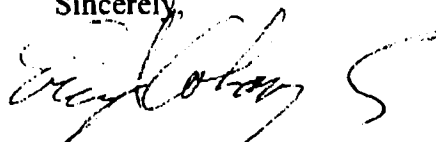
I respect the leadership in this country. Especially now, when challenges our facing this nation as never before, those in national leadership should set an example of cooperation and high-minded action.

I believe the recently reached settlement between Microsoft and the Department of Justice embodies this ideal of high-minded cooperation. The settlement is fair, and it would be tragic to allow the government to continue its ill-advised campaign to fragment and effectively render irrelevant one of our nation's greatest and most productive companies.

The settlement affects the health of the entire information technology industry. Manufacturers and designers of hardware and software must be able to rely on Microsoft and it's competitors to incorporate technology innovations into their products as rapidly as commercially viable. This is best accomplished through unfettered competition NOT by government committees choosing winners and losers.

I am hopeful that the Department of Justice will endorse the terms of the settlement to the other branches of government and will stem any further pursuance of this matter.

Sincerely,



Eric Cobaugh